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ABSTRACT

This paper examines a case of educational innovation--the introduction of new methods for teaching reading in the Republic of Guinea, West Africa--as a reality check on the appealing but sweeping theory of John Meyer and his colleagues about the diffusion of educational ideals. The paper focuses on Guinea's official adoption of the "mixed" method ("la methode semi-globale"), an approach meant to balance phonics with reading for meaning. It draws from a case study using participant observation and ethnographic interviewing which traced ideas about good reading at the Guinea Pedagogical Institute. At the level of what Meyer calls rhetoric, the paper argues that the global model of modern schooling includes the premise that ordinarily the mixed method of reading instruction is preferable and the sub-premise that within the mixed method, it is preferable to emphasize reading for meaning. The paper states that world institutions theory implies uniformity in the model of schooling among core nations, since they have been borrowing from one another since the 19th century, but the question is whether the core really holds a single model of modern schooling available for the periphery to borrow. The paper as a whole involves a 3-way comparison among Guinea, France, and the United States. (Contains 5 figures, a table, 13 notes, and 47 references.) (NKA)

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What counts as the mixed method of reading instruction in Guinea?

Fractures in the global culture of modern schooling

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This paper examines a case of educational innovation—the introduction of new methods for teaching reading in the Republic of Guinea, West Africa—as a reality check on the appealing but sweeping theory of John Meyer and his colleagues about the diffusion of educational ideals.[1] It focuses on Guinea's official adoption of the "mixed" method (*la méthode semi-globale*), an approach meant to balance phonics with reading for meaning.

The Research Questions

"World institutions" theory

John Meyer and his colleagues see educational reform as the worldwide diffusion of a single model of "modern" schooling. Their "global rationalization" theory (to use Davies & Guppy's 1997 term) or "world institutions" theory (to use Fuller 1991) argues that institutions and ideals of Western schooling spread first within Europe and now are spreading to the rest of the world (Ramirez & Boli 1987). They attribute the diffusion not to industrialization or other economic forces but to the spread of a worldwide cultural model of the modern nation-state, part of which includes a model of modern mass schooling (Ramirez & Ventresca 1992).[2]

"World institutions" theory argues that a single cultural model of schooling—"one normative institutional model" (Ramirez & Ventresca 1992: 49)—is spreading around the globe. "Western ideals and forms of organization, having oozed throughout Western consciousness, jump across national boundaries and root within emerging nation-states" (Fuller 1991: 44). Therefore, we can expect a degree of uniformity both within core nations and between the core and the periphery of the world system.

As evidence of this global cultural model, these scholars point to the global acceptance of the very idea of mass compulsory schooling, the standardization of schools within every country and to their focus, in all countries, to socialization of the individual as the central social unit (Boli, Ramirez & Meyer 1986, but cf. Fiala & Lanford 1987). They demonstrate considerable uniformity in elementary curricula worldwide (Meyer, Kamens & Benavot 1992), some parallels in secondary curricula (Kamens, Meyer, & Benavot 1996). Other scholars provide parallel evidence by pointing to uniformity in outward forms of organization such as schedules and lesson plans (Fuller 1991), and by noting global parallels in the typical forms of teacher-student interaction (Fuller 1991; see also Anderson 1987).

The notion of a worldwide cultural model fascinates me as an anthropologist. Indeed, I admit that the global uniformity Meyer, Ramirez and others have demonstrated at the level of official curriculum already has astonishing implications for the concept of culture. But are we witnessing the spread of a uniform model in the less tangible domains of education, such as pedagogical methods? In spite of certain universalizing studies (Anderson 1987), do schools everywhere really look and sound the same once you begin to spend time in classrooms? In other words, how deeply into behavior does the presumed global model penetrate?

The mixed method of reading instruction

To explore that question, I focus here on method for teaching reading to young children. I do so in the context of a larger study of what counts as good reading instruction in Guinea (Anderson-Levitt & Alimasi in press) and a larger study of cultural knowledge for teaching reading in France and the United States (Anderson-Levitt f.c.). Specifically, I investigate what counts as the "mixed method" of reading instruction in Guinea, France and the United States. The "mixed method" can be glossed as any method of introducing students to reading that combines study of the letter-sound code ("phonics") with study of reading for meaning ("whole-word" or "whole language" instruction).

Now, world institutions theory does not actually claim that pedagogical methods will be uniform around the world. On the contrary, Meyer (1992) argues that nations agree on the outline of curriculum but may disagree on "details" of methods, materials and texts, such as "what methods and emphases should be involved" in the teaching of literacy. They do not offer a theoretical argument for this distinction; rather, they seem to base it on empirical observation. Presumably, they have noticed debate among scientists over pedagogical methods. In contrast, no one debates about whether to devote 1/3 of the school day to literacy (Meyer 1992).

It is true that scientists—and, occasionally, legislators, as in California recently—vigorously debate the best method for early reading instruction. A "Great Debate" has gone on for centuries between proponents of code-based approaches (e.g., Chall 1983; Flesch 1955; Inizan 1968) and proponents of meaning-based approaches (e.g., Smith 1997; Foucambert 1976). Instruction that focuses strictly on the code is called "phonics" in the United States and *la méthode synthétique* in France. The latter term emphasizes that one learns to blend or "synthesize" the letters of a word in order to pronounce the word, that is, to decode it.[3] Some French educators and most Guinean educators use the term *la méthode syllabique* (the "syllabic method") for this approach because students use it to sound out unfamiliar syllables and therefore, in principle, learn to sound out unfamiliar words syllable by syllable. Instruction that emphasizes meaning is often called *la méthode globale* in France. I will gloss this term as the "whole-word" method, since the French word *globale* means "whole," but keep in mind that it refers not just to recognizing words as wholes but to reading for meaning. In a pure whole-word method, the instructor lets the students discover letter-sound correspondences rather casually in words they already know how to read by sight. "Language experience" and "whole language" are examples of meaning-based approaches in the United States.

However, I would point out that, in spite of the noisy debates, school boards and ministries of education as well as textbook authors everywhere actually produce a homogenized, standardized version of method.[4] Specifically, they always provide some version of the mixed method of instruction, that is, a method that combines in some proportion or other instruction in the phonetic code and instruction in reading for meaning.[5] In Guinea, the "mixed" method is sometimes called the *méthode mixte* but more often as the *méthode semi-globale* (the semi-whole-word method). As Guinea's official curriculum puts it, it

> appears to be the happy medium between the syllabic method and the whole-word method. Like

> the syllabic method, it helps the child to perceive words as combinations of letters and syllables and from the whole-word method it takes up the idea that knowing how to read consists not of decoding but of grasping the meaning of a text in a global fashion. [Guinea n.d.:51]

More specifically, I would argue that in the past two decades there has been increasing emphasis on reading-for-meaning within the mixed method (but not an abandonment of phonics instruction) in the countries I am concerned with here. Beginning with official instructions it issued in the late 1970s, the French Ministry of Education has emphasized that "Lire, c'est comprendre" (to read is to understand). In the United States, a movement emphasizing comprehension made itself felt, for example, in the incorporation of some whole-language principles into basal reading series (Stahl 1999; Stahl, Pagnuccuo & Suttles 1996; see also Weber 1987).[6] Guinea, where teachers had been using a syllabic method by default during the sometimes turbulent years since independence in 1958, manifested this trend by officially replacing the syllabic method with a semi-global method adopted from France at the end of the 1980s.

At the level of what Meyer calls rhetoric, then, I argue that the global model of modern schooling includes the premise that ordinarily the mixed method of reading instruction is preferable and the sub-premise that within the mixed method, it is preferable to emphasize reading for meaning. The question that I raise in this paper is, what does that rhetoric mean? How deep does the commonality go? What counts as the mixed method in different parts of the world?

The research questions

"What counts as the mixed method?" translates into two specific questions suggested by world institutions theory. First, the global perspective implies a degree of uniformity between core and peripheral educational systems because the periphery borrows from the core. On the other hand, students of the diffusion of innovations know that borrowers may transform or "re-invent" what they borrow (Rogers 1995; see Jacob 1999 for examples). Ulf Hannerz describes this process as the "creolization" of what is borrowed; like creole speakers who make a new language out of the original English or French or Portuguese, so people who borrow Western ideas are wont to rework them into something new (1987, 1992). Therefore, the first question about global uniformity is, When a peripheral nation borrows "the Western model," does the model really remain unchanged? In this case, I will ask whether Guinea transformed the mixed method it borrowed from France.

Second, world institutions theory implies uniformity in the model of schooling among core nations, since they have been borrowing from one another since the 19th century. But one can ask whether the core really holds a single model of modern schooling available for the periphery to borrow. Here, I will compare French to U.S. definitions of the mixed method, both as applied by expatriate advisors in Guinea and as practiced at home.

Thus the paper as a whole involves a three-way comparison between Guinea, France and the United States. Moreover, I will be wary in my comparisons of the "great gulf" between

doctrine and reality of mass education (Boli, Ramirez & Meyer 1986:117; Meyer & Baker 1996). World institutions theory focuses only on the doctrine or rhetoric, not actual practice. Yet as an anthropologist, I would be uneasy describing official ideology only without describing classroom practice. Therefore, I will look here both at ideals—in the form of prescriptions from Ministries of Education and textbook designers—and at the reality of classroom practice.

The Study

Why Guinea?

I chose to work in Guinea because the country is in the midst of a literacy revolution. Although one of the least schooled nations in the world, Guinea is rapidly expanding primary education and its educators are actively promoting ideals of good pedagogy. The fact that they recently adopted a new series of French-produced readers and have been revising their own locally-produced readers makes good methods of reading instruction a naturally occurring topic of discussion in the country. In addition, I happen to be in a good position for searching out different models for reading instruction made available to Guinea because I have previously compared reading instruction in two countries that are major donors to Guinea, France and the United States (Anderson-Levitt 1987; f.c.).

Methods and Data

This paper draws from a larger case study of what counts as good practice in the realm of early reading instruction in Guinea. In the larger study, I identified a number of ideals (e.g., student-centered instruction, best language of instruction, criteria for good reading textbooks) held by Guinean educators and also by the international donors and advisors with whom they came in contact.

Between November 1997 and November 1998, I used participant observation (Spradley 1980) and ethnographic interviewing (Spradley 1979) to trace ideas about good reading instruction that were moving into and through Guinea. I conducted five months of fieldwork at Guinea's Pedagogical Institute. Ntal Alimasi and I interviewed 30 international advisors in Conakry, Washington DC and Paris, and 34 staff members of the Guinean Ministry of Education and its Pedagogical Institute. In addition, Boubacar Bayero Diallo and I interviewed 21 teacher educators and supervisors and 39 teachers. We observed 21 different classes in 11 different schools, urban and rural. I am also attempting to reconstruct the history of teaching methods for reading instruction in Guinea with the help of first-hand accounts from participants as well as prior studies (Bah-Lalya 1991; Diallo 1991). Finally, I am comparing first-grade readers produced in France, in the United States, and in Guinea. This paper draws on a preliminary analysis of the above data focusing on the concept of the mixed method.

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My description of reading practice in France comes from participant-observation and teacher interviews in 55 classes, including 34 first-grade classes, over the period 1976-1994 (Anderson-Levitt 1987, f.c.). My description of reading practice in the United States comes from limited classroom observation of my own (8 first- and second-grade classrooms observed in 1978 and 1988) and from descriptions of actual practice in the classroom observation literature (e.g., Durkin 1984).

Guinea borrows and transforms the mixed method

Borrowing

Under its colonization by France, teachers in the relatively small number of Western-style or "French schools" taught children to read in French and used the syllabic method of reading instruction.[7] Most relied on the colonial primer, *Mamadou et Bineta* (Davesne 1950), which originally appeared in the 1930s (and which is still for sale in both Guinea and France). In this primer, each lesson began with the study of a key word, such as *la tête* (the head) (Figure 1), which the teacher was to illustrate by showing the thing itself and by drawing its picture on the board. Immediately after, the teacher would pull out the sound to be studied—here, *t*—from the key word. As soon as a consonant sound was thus introduced, the class would combine it systematically with every vowel already studied to form syllables (ti, tu, to, ta, te, té, tè, tê). With such syllables, they could form other words such as *tâte* (to feel), *ôte* (to take off [a hat]), *tata* (the name Tata), toto (another name).[8] Finally, the class could read little sentences using these words, such as "toto, as-tu ta tête?" (Toto, do you have a head?).

Insert Figure 1 about here.

When Guinea gained independence in 1958, France withdrew its aid immediately and Guinean educators had to scramble to find teaching materials from Ivory Coast, Senegal, France and elsewhere. Often they continued to use Davesne's primer but, according to my interlocutors, a few happened upon textbooks using a mixed method.

In 1968 Guinea launched a pioneering country-wide experiment in using six local languages for instruction. (French was introduced as a second language from third grade on.) Again, teachers scrambled to adapt teaching methods to instruction in local languages. The Pedagogic Institute and the Academy of languages issued readers and a syllabary in Manike (Malinké), Susu (Sousou) and Poular (Peul or FulBe). But during this era there was also clandestine teaching of French in more affluent families with the aid of Davesne's primer.

Eventually, relations with the West, including France, began to thaw. In 1980, the Ministry of Education asked the Pedagogic Institute to prepare textbooks for teaching French as a foreign language. With the collaboration of two French linguists, the Institute published *Bonjour Fanta Bonjour Fodé 3e année* (Hello Fanta, Hello Fodé, 3rd year) in 1983. One can see certain influences of the philosophy "Reading is communicating" and "Reading is understanding" that had recently come out in official instructions from the Ministry of Education in France (France 1973, 1978). Thus the textbook's lesson begins with a sentence instead of

with a single word (Figure 2). In addition, the book emphasizes a Guinean content (whereas Davesne refers to other parts of Africa, and to a colonial Africa at that), and it introduces several "authentic texts"(letters, how-to instructions, posters).

Insert Figure 2 about here.

With the change of regime in 1984, Guinea immediately began to rethink its educational system. National Conferences on Education held in 1984 and in 1985 with the participation of international donor agencies resolved to reinstate French as the language of instruction. Give the almost total lack of textbooks (Doukouré 1997:7), Guinean educators again scrambled to teach reading—now in French—with whatever materials they could find. Often, this was again Davesne's primer.

However, from this moment the Ministry of Education and the Pedagogic Institute began to develop a national curriculum that would use a semi-global or mixed method of reading instruction. The new curriculum, which appeared (in a limited edition) in 1987 and was published and distributed more widely early in the 1990s, declared "Reading is understanding" (Guinea n.d.: 30). "Then," as a staff member of the Pedagogic Institute explained it, "the question arose, How to have a 1st and 2nd year reading book? So the Department [that is, the Ministry of Education] asked my colleagues to adapt *Bonjour Fanta* to produce, eventually, *Langage-Lecture*" (Language-Reading, a first- and second-year language arts textbook). A new pair of French linguists participated in the development of the latter (Bah et al., 1992). Like the new curriculum, these textbooks and their teachers' guide embraced a mixed method (Figure 3).

Insert Figure 3 about here.

The new textbooks went into experimental usage in some schools in 1988 or 1989, and around the same time the Normal Schools began to teach teachers-in-training to use the mixed method. In 1993 or 1994 the official version of the first-year book was distributed to teachers across the country and in-service training in its use began. The second-year book was distributed in 1995 and 1996. By 1998, the new textbooks, which had been sold to families, had virtually disappeared from the marketplaces. Although working with World Bank funding to produce a second edition of the books, Guinea meanwhile used a loan from a different donor to acquire a French-produced textbook series, *Le Flamboyant* (Villette et al. 1994). The latest textbooks, however, are similar in organization and still use a mixed method.

In summary, a few Guinean educators discovered the mixed method as early as the 1960s, but most of them did not encounter it until the country imported it in the late 1980s with significant assistance from two pairs of French linguists.

Mixed method, French style

In order to explain how Guinean transformed what it borrowed, I must begin by describing what the mixed method looks like in France, both in the ideal and in actual classroom practice.

Official curriculum. The official instructions from the Ministry of Education in France are not very explicit regarding exactly how teachers should teach reading, though they do insist on a mixed method. "Master of blending (*la combinatoire*) ... is necessary ... but it has value only when combined with understanding of the idea expressed" (France 1985:23-24).[9] And how does one teach the mixed method? The Ministry says simply that one goes "from the word to its decomposition and recomposition," and eventually to fluent reading (France 1992:135).

Textbooks. Textbooks provide much more detailed prescriptions than the Ministry. One of the most widespread textbooks in France,[10] *Lecture en Fête*, identifies itself as using a mixed method in boldface letters in its foreword: "Methodical training in comprehension of a text and in learning of the code are developed simultaneously" (Vian et al. 1993:3).[11] This textbook replicates many "authentic" documents (photographs, advertising posters, maps and so on), indicating that it emphasizing reading as understanding in context. But its modules also presume "a systematic study of sound-letter (*phonies-graphies*) relationships" (1993:30). From the fourth module on, the text presents occasional two-page spreads that it refers to as "blending pages" (*pages de combinatoire*). These pages contain lists of syllables, albeit always presented in the context of whole words (Figure 4). Another best-selling reader in France, *Le Nouveau Fil des mots* (Debayle, et al. 1990), likewise identifies itself as using the mixed method. Its foreword promises that it will allow the child to develop "a strategy for searching for meaning" but will also "guarantee a sure and step-by-step establishment of blending (*la combinatoire*)" (1990:3). Like *Lecture en Fête*, this textbook presents columns of syllables highlighted in the context of familiar words. The prior version of this textbook, *Au Fils des mots* (Touyarot et al.1977) included two tables that illustrated syllables isolated below the familiar words from which they were pulled.

Figure 4. One of the syllable tables from *Lecture en Fête* (Vian et al. 1993:35)

avec	toi	
le	toit	de la maison
	ta	maman
un	tas	
	tu	attends

Classroom practice. How did the mixed method translate in the classroom? On the basis of observations of 34 first-grade classrooms in France from 1976 through 1994 (including observations of some classes that lasted for several days and even for several months), I can show that nearly all teachers used a mixed method and followed a fairly predictable sequence in teaching a reading lesson (Anderson-Levitt 1987 and forthcoming). (Note that each lesson lasted 2 to 3 days taught in 2 to 3 sessions per day.) No matter which textbook they taught with, and even if they used no textbook at all except texts elicited from the students, almost all the teachers I observed moved from whole-word instruction to an "analysis" of a particular sound to be studied, to practice in blending that sound (Table 1, column 1).

During the whole-word phase of a lesson, the teachers elicited comments from the students about a picture (usually a poster-sized illustration provided by the textbook publisher). (Table 1 column 2 details steps in a typical lesson.) In classes that used no textbooks, teachers elicited sentences during sharing time with an ear to the sound they might study. [Do U.S. readers need a description of what this actually looks and sounds like?] Teachers wrote on the board some of the sentences provided by the students, making sure it conformed pretty closely to the text the children would see later in their readers. The bulk of the reading lesson continued with whole-class board work. Teachers led the students in learning to read the sentences by sight and to recognize its individual words, sometimes using big flashcards and little manipuable labels as aids. This is the beginning of the "decomposition" referred to by the Ministry, here, the move "from the sentence to the word."

Insert Table 1 about here.

Notice that it was in this activity of discussion and writing on the board that lessons in France emphasized reading for meaning. French teachers assumed that the students understand the texts they read because the students themselves offered the sentences. If the students actually said, "Denis got a mosquito bite last night" (in a classroom without a textbook) or "A mule plays with Bobi" (in a class looking at an illustration from the classic reader *Daniel et Valérie*), the teacher presumed they knew what those sentences mean.

During the "analytic" phase of a lesson, teachers helped students break down the now-familiar words into syllables, eventually identifying the sound to be studied. This phase continues the "decomposition" of the text, from the word to the syllable and from the syllable to the sound.

Finally, during the "blending" or "synthetic" phase of the lesson, the teacher would dictate words and syllables for the children to write on slates. Sometimes these would be as-yet-unfamiliar words, requiring the student to "recombine" individual sounds to form the syllable. This, then, is the "recomposition" to which the Ministry alluded. Teachers likewise required students to attempt this blending or decoding when reading aloud from the board and from the textbooks. After recycling through these steps as necessary over the course of the lesson, teachers would wrap up with a formal dictation of words and syllables in ink in permanent notebooks. Teachers in France spent half the lesson or more on blending (dictations, reading syllables out of context, using decoding cues to read texts).

As you might expect, the teachers' practice did not conform perfectly to prescriptions in Ministry instructions and in the textbooks themselves (Table 1, column 3). The Ministry encouraged silent reading, which I witnessed very rarely in classrooms. It also pressed teachers to form homogeneous reading groups early in the year, but teachers who grouped at all began grouping only around March (Anderson-Levitt forthcoming). Similarly, teachers were much more likely than the textbooks to present lists or tables of syllables isolated from the context of familiar words. For example, Madame Nanterre (observed in March and April of 1988) used a

textbook that emphasized reading for meaning. Nonetheless, we saw tables of syllables posted on her board (Figure 5).

Insert Figure 5 about here.

Transformations in Guinea

When explaining Guinean transformations of the borrowed method, I will be careful to distinguish the official curriculum and comments from pedagogical experts on the one hand from actual classroom practice on the other.

You need to know that in Guinea, very few children attend pre-school, whereas almost all French children attend pre-school for 2 to 3 years. The language of instruction in Guinea is French, but hardly any Guinean children speak French at home. Therefore, the official curriculum specifies that the first 8 weeks of the first year be devoted to introducing students to the French language before formal reading instruction is to begin. Also, given the students' need to learn French, reading instruction is spread over two years. Thus the 1st and 2nd years of Guinean schooling correspond to the first year (*cours préparatoire*) in France.

Studying the key sentence. The Guinean version of the mixed method differed from the French model in two important ways, the first concerning study of the key sentence. As in France, the Guinean Ministry simply proposed that a reading lesson begin with a "whole-word" phase, the study of a key sentence (un "texte de base"), based on an illustration in the textbook (Table 1, column 4). However, instead of "eliciting" this sentence from the students who, as noted, know little if any French, the curriculum directs teachers simply to "propose" it. For instance, in the lesson illustrated by Figure 3, the teacher would lead the class to say or would provide themselves the sentence, "Pour aller à l'école, Marie porte une robe rouge" (To go to school, Marie puts on a red dress). In practice, this phase of the reading lesson turned into a lesson on French vocabulary, with the teacher instructing students in the names of objects and actions shown in the book's illustration. Once the teacher (or some star pupil) had provided the key sentences, the teacher would have many students in the class repeat the sentence. Thus this phase served the purpose of teaching "comprehension" at a more basic level than the corresponding phase in France.

After the whole-word study of the key sentence, words of the text "are isolated, then methodically studied through structural exercises" (pp. 51-2). (A reading lesson, I should note, lasts one week for the 1st year and half a week for the 2nd year.) Next comes analysis: "One pulls from the key sentence the words containing the phoneme to be studied" (p. 52)—in this case, pour, Marie, robe and other words containing the /r/ sound. "Phonological exercises ... must permit the student to isolate the phoneme from the string of sounds" (p. 52). Finally, there is a "text for fluent reading" (not shown in the figure here) to read and understand.

Attenuation of the syllabic step in the curriculum and teachers' guides. Guinea's second transformation of the French-style mixed concerns the blending or recomposition phase. In contrast to the French curriculum, the Guinean official curriculum scarcely mentions blending.

The official prescriptions touch only very lightly on blending. The curriculum mentions just once "words as combinations of letters and syllables" and it proposes that only one session during the week's reading lesson be devoted to "work on the syllable" (p. 53).

The teacher's guide that accompanies the official textbook *Langage-Lecture 1ère année*, developed by the Pedagogic Institute on the basis of the official curriculum, makes this notion of "work on the syllable" (which it calls "Reading syllables") more explicit. In the sample lesson it provides, "The teacher links consonants to the 'a' [the sound being studied] to form monosyllabic words or more simply syllables," for example, ka – ma – ta – sa – pa – etc. (Bah et al., 1992a, p. 59). Thus this exercise involves blending consonants and vowels. However, this phonics interlude represents only one of some 15 activities that make up the week's reading lesson. You can see in Figure 3 that the bottom of the lesson's second page provides for the possibility of working with syllables (*re, ra, ro*, etc.). In this case, all the syllables illustrated come from words studied during the lesson.

In some classes, use of the syllabic method

According to our preliminary observations, actual classroom practice for reading instruction in Guinea varies somewhat. First, we were told that the syllabic or purely phonics method persists in some corners of the country. I observed it myself only once, in a rural 2nd year class, in 1994. Observations conducted in 1994 in the context of a nation-wide study that involved many rural as well as urban schools (Anderson-Levitt, Bloch et Maiga Soumaré 1994), we found only one case among 14 1st year classes our teams observed where the phonics textbook *Mamadou et Bineta* was used. In 12 of the classes, in contrast, teachers seemed to use the mixed method of the textbooks *Langage-Lecture*. (In the 14th class, it was impossible to determine the method from the observer's notes.)

More commonly, I have found a number of teachers who integrate phonics or the syllabic method into their practice of the mixed method.

A veteran teacher

For example, in 1998 I asked a veteran teacher to explain "la combinatoire" (blending) to me. This conversation took place in the month of October, when most 1st-year teachers, he included, had not yet begun teaching reading per say, that is, the analysis of sounds. At that point in the year, teachers were still introducing the French language to their first graders.

"But you saw it in my class!" he exclaimed.

"On the blackboard? The table that remained from last year's work?" I asked.

"Yes!" And he began to draw with a stick in the dust of the courtyard, where we were sitting during recess:

	t	
i	ti	
o	to	
u		

> "It's true that not everybody does it," he added. "During the in-service training (to use the new textbook *Langage-Lecture*), the trainers told us that it's optional. They told us it's difficult. But we older teachers, we find that it's necessary. ... And it's in *Langage-Lecture*, in fact, but there's no table. There are syllables."

This veteran teacher had chosen himself, then, to elaborate the syllabic or blending stage of his lessons a little beyond the exercises proposed the in the teacher's guide. Note that he did it in spite of light discouragement on the part of the supervisors who ran the training session for the mixed method.

In many classes, absence of a syllabic stage. As the veteran teacher pointed out, it's not everybody who teaches blending in Guinea. A supervisor told me the same thing:

> The mixed method is like two funnels. First, you move from the sentence to the isolation of the sound. That's the narrow spot. But afterwards, you have to come out (as if coming out through the second, upside-down funnel), from the sound to the text. *Now, a lot of colleagues stop with the isolation of the letter. Afterwards, blending (la combinatoire) is neglected.* But the second phase [of the mixed method], it's syllabic. (my emphasis)

As he said, I had the impression myself that in many of the 1st and 2nd year classes that we observed in 1998, reading lessons did not include a blending stage.[12]

In typical lessons, according to our preliminary analysis, teachers started by having students observe the picture in the book. (In some classrooms only a handful of students owned books, but the teacher might walk up and down the aisles showing the picture to the other students.) Students or the teachers themselves would produce the lesson's basic text of a sentence or two, and the teacher would write it on the board. Teachers would read it several times; afterwards, the students would read it from memory, in chorus and individually. Often, teachers would require a student to point to each word while reading. Sometimes, teachers would pull out the each word of the sentence by writing them on labels or on student slates, scramble them, and ask students to put them back in order. All of these activities corresponded to the "global" or whole-word phase of French-style lessons.

Eventually—sometimes very early in the lesson—teachers would single out the sound to be studied. For example, they would ask, "What sound do you hear the most?" or "Who can say (or show) a word with the 'a'?" or, "Who can show me the 'a's' in the text?" (Here, hearing the sound sometimes became interchangeable with seeing the letter.) The letter identified would be circled or written over in red chalk. Often, teachers would ask students to indicate whether they heard the sound/saw the letter at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a word. Very often teachers would propose a "word hunt," inviting students to find other words that contained the same sound. (In our experience, students usually found words containing the relevant letter in their textbooks and "read" the word—or rather, the picture that went with the word. After all, they barely spoke French and commanded little French vocabulary.) All of these activities correspond to the "analysis" phase of French reading lessons.

Once the class had isolated the sound or the letter, that was the end of novel activities in many classrooms. During the remaining sessions of the week's lesson, the class would repeat versions of the activities above. They would produce more lists of words containing the lesson's sound. They would reread the basic text on the board and in their textbooks. In some classes, they would also read a second text (text for fluent reading or "synthesis" text). The greater part of reading lessons in most classes consisted of students taking turns at reading the basic text on the board. But they would not study blending in the manner suggested by the veteran teacher cited above.

In our observations, it was fairly rare to see a word cut into syllables or to see a column of syllables on the board. It was fairly rare to witness exercises in which the class combined consonants plus vowels to create syllables. It was fairly rare to see a dictation of syllables or of words. In our partial observations of 18 1st and 2nd year classes, we observed whole-word and analysis exercises pretty often: we witnessed whole-word (sight) reading of the text at the board in 11 classes, isolation of a letter or sound in 14 classes, word hunts in 9 classes. On the other hand, we saw evidence of tables of syllables or blending exercises in only 4 classes.

A 1st-year lesson

As an illustration of a fairly typical lesson, consider a 1st-year class in an urban school at the end of April, 1998. When I arrived, Mme D. was leading the class in reading the basic text on the board, "maman est malade. je pile du mais" (mama is ill. i pound the corn). It was Monday and the first session of a lesson on the letter m. After the oral reading, Mme D. asked the class, "What is the sound you hear most often?" One student produced the answer: "The letter m." That was the beginning of analysis.

The teacher launched a word hunt with her next question, "Who can give me a word with [the letter m]?"

"Moussa [a boy's name]," proposed one student.

"Mou-ssa," repeated the teacher, who wrote it on the board.

"Mariama," said another student.

"You hear it once in Mariama?" asked the teacher. "Mariama," she said, writing the girl's name in cursive on the board.

After a few minutes like this, you could read many names on the board, organized like this:

moussa	salématou
mariama	
marie	
mima	malik
mimi	lamine

The class identified the m's in the words, but did not reread them.

Five days later, the last session of the same reading lesson went on in a similar manner. There was another word hunt. Afterwards, the class read in the textbook isolated words illustrated with little pictures, beginning with "marigot" (pond). The teacher regularly quesitioned the children in the following manner:

Teacher: I hear the sound—

Students: --m!

T: In—

Ss: marigot!

The teacher continued to help students read the words in the book (or rather, to learn the French words for the pictures they were looking at). She emphasized the syllables containing the /m/ sound:

T: La mo-teur (the motor). Again the sound—

Ss: m!

T: Il fu-me (he smokes). At the end of *fume* we hear—

Ss: m!

And so on for "la to-ma-te" (tomato), "la plu-me" (feather), and other words. With that exercise, they completed their lesson on the letter m.

In this class, then, the teacher taught the students, above all, French vocabulary and the link between the written letter m and its sound. She also demonstrated orally (though not at the board) that words can be divided into syllables and that one can hear the /m/ sound in particular syllables of particular words. However, she never directly attacked the blending of m with vowels.

While Madame D. ignored the "syllable work" proposed by the Ministry and the teacher's guide completely, other teachers inserted it but so briefly as to almost escape notice.

In a 2nd-year class

In 2nd year classes, each reading lesson lasts just 2 days. In October 1998, during the second day of a lesson on the letter r, Mme F. spent most of the session asking students to circle the "sound" r in words on the board. She also asked whether they found it at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the words. That was "analysis." However, very briefly, she wrote on the board r a, and said to the class, "Read that." She did the same thing for the syllables ri, and ro. The r-lesson ended with this moment of blending. However, we observed that her lesson on l that followed in the next two days ended with analysis and involved no blending.

We also witnessed an event in a different, rural 2nd grade class that gives some insight into teachers' motivations.

Incident in a rural school

In this village school I found a young 2nd-year teacher who, like the veteran teacher cited earlier, apparently integrated blending exercises into his lesson on the /s/ sound. I walked into his classroom with the local inspector and a group of his colleagues. Among the exerices still up on the blackboard was the following table:

s	→ a	— sa —	— salade
	→ u	— su —	— sucre
	→ i	— si —	— silo
	→ ou	— sou —	— soulier
	→ er	— ser —	— serviette

The inspector noticed this table and teased the young teacher, "But that's an infraction! That's blending (la combinatoire)!"

"But that's an exercise from *Langage-Lecture* (the official 2nd-year textbook)!" the young man defended himself.

"They forbade us to do that," said one of his colleagues.

The young teacher continued to defend the exercise while I asked another teacher, "They forbade you to do that?"

"We went to a workshop (on the use of *Langage-Lecture*)," the teacher explained, "and the representative told us that if they found blending (*decomposer*) like that, it's forbidden. We needed to burn, to throw out, the phonics books (*syllabaires*)." The inspector confirmed a moment later, "They told us to reject, even to burn, the phonics books."

Here, supervisor and teachers interpreted what may have been an injunction against the use of the old phonics book, *Mamadou et Bineta*, as a warning not to incorporate explicit blending activities into the mixed method of reading instruction.

Summary

In France, a typical lesson using the mixed method (1) begins with students generating a short text (thus guaranteeing that they grasp its meaning), (2) moves to sight reading of the text, (3) "analyzes" the sound of a particular letter in the text, and (4) leads students to blend that letter with other letters to decode syllables and words. French teachers tend to emphasize the last, most phonics-based stage (Anderson-Levitt f.c.).

Guinean educators have transformed the first phase of this model out of necessity. Since they cannot expect their students to generate sentences in French, they turn the first phase into a French language lesson in which they eventually produce the key text themselves.

Transformation of the the final phonics stage of reading lessons is more complex. The published official curriculum and the Guinean-produced reader give this phase of the lesson less attention than the earlier stages. More dramatically, some of the teachers we observed in class

avoided decoding exercises altogether. Elsewhere I have suggested why Guineans re-invented in this particular manner (Anderson-Levitt 1999). The ambivalence about explicit decoding derives, I think, from the association of phonics-based methods with the colonial era. Guinea's pedagogical experts castigate pure phonics as "out-dated," and in their enthusiasm may have frightened teachers and supervisors away from decoding even when it is just one stage in the mixed method. Paradoxically, association with colonial-era instruction also conjures up positive images among teachers and supervisors who remember it as the "good old days" of teaching (Anderson-Levitt 1999). Thus 29% of supervisors and 45% of teachers told us on an anonymous written questionnaire that they preferred the "syllabic" or phonics-oriented method to the mixed method (total n = 110). In fact, the very same supervisor who scolded the young teaching for teaching decoding expressed a certain nostalgia for phonics.

Now, if Guinea transformed the mixed method it borrowed from France, we may question the degree to which third world models conform to the first-world model anywhere in the world. We may expect not a single global model but, not far beneath the surface of apparent global uniformity, a difference between core and peripheral versions of the model (see Falgout & Levin 1992; Fuller 1991). But this case takes us further. If Guinea transformed the mixed method in a *particular* way as a reaction to its own *particular* history with France, we may expect that each particular nation will transform the core model it starts with according to its own local logic. Therefore, at a minimum, we can expect a model of modern schooling at the core and multiple models in the periphery. But is there even a single model at the core?

Contradictions within the core

Is there really a single model of modern schooling available to be borrowed? Now, some educational experts (from outside the field of comparative education) may protest that this question is foolish on its face. There have always been competing philosophies of education within a single nation (for instance, see Peretti 1993 on the multiplicity of pedagogical models in France). This is certainly true, but does not suffice to rebut the world institutions argument for two reasons. First, what matters is not the possible multiplicity inside a core nation but rather what models or model gets shared with peripheral nations. If the borrowing should occur through contact with only a few channels—say, only a handful of educational officers of donor agencies, a handful of technical consultants, and a handful of core universities training peripheral experts, then it is not impossible that core nations communicate a fairly uniform model. Second, we must recognize that educational researchers engaged in polemic debates with their colleagues may exaggerate the degree of competition among models "out there in the field" of practitioners. Witness the ubiquity of the mixed method (its precise meaning aside for the moment) in contrast to the debate between code-based and meaning-based proponents.

Conflicts among expatriate advisors

First, then, let me ask what messages about the mixed method expatriate experts delivered in Guinea. It turned out that North American and French advisors disagreed on the appropriate mix of reading-for-comprehension and phonics in a mixed method. The French seemed to feel the Guineans did not use enough phonics. I have already suggested why they

might feel that way: the Guinean method muted or lopped off the blending phase so important to French reading lessons. Thus one French advisor who was consulting informally with Guinean staff at the Pedagogic Institute on the revision of their textbook *Langage-Lecture* was helping them insert more explicit phonics into the new edition of the locally produced reader. [Give more detail?]

On the other hand, North American advisors found the Guinean textbooks to be too heavily phonics-oriented already. For example, one advisor working intimately with some of the very same staff at the Pedagogic Institute commented on the textbook *Langage-Lecture*:

> We went through it and I found it (though I'm not an expert) an odd mix. "Semi-globale," as you [KAL] said, has its own meaning in French. It would seem to mean combining whole language and phonetic ...[Yet it] feels like straight-away phonics.

This advisor would have preferred an out-and-out whole language approach, that is, strictly reading for meaning: "I want it to be interesting. I'm more whole-language ideologically; kids like stuff interesting, funny, relevant, challenges to think, predict—the same as adults." However, the advisor went on to acknowledge that Guinea's lack of books and other materials made a whole-language approach infeasible.

> My own take is that, for rural Africa, a combination is the best approach. It needs to be adapted, of course. Whole language alone [would be] less effective and unfeasible. Phonetics without whole language is sheer drudgery.

I heard similar comments from some of the other North American advisors in Guinea. Indeed, this particular team was developing simple storybooks as supplemental materials to promote reading for meaning and for pleasure.[13]

Mixed method, U.S. style versus French style

Meanwhile, "back home" in the respective countries of these expatriate advisors, the mixed method looked very different indeed. First, let me compare at the level of normative prescriptions. Durkin (1984) nicely summarizes the steps in mixed-method lessons as prescribed by several U.S. basal series. The steps Durkin identifies seem to fit within the first two of the three phases in French lessons (Table 2). That is, the manuals first prescribe activities to encourage reading for meaning (by sight), beginning with discussion of vocabulary the students are about to encounter in their textbooks and then moving to discussion of background information that will help them make sense of the text. They also provide opportunities for studying the sounds of letters in the context of words, which would correspond to the French and Guinean "analysis" of sounds within syllables and words. However, the manuals do not prescribe separate instruction of blending or decoding, that is, the "recomposition" of words from sounds.

It is surprisingly difficult to glean descriptions of actual practice in typical first-grade classrooms in the United States. (Ethnographers rarely describe the full structure of lessons, while other researchers tend to describe special interventions rather than ordinary teaching.)

Happily, Durkin (1984) goes on to compare the prescriptions of teachers' manuals with what teachers actually did. Although her study included only six first-grade teachers, her description of typical lessons coincided almost completely with a summary description I had developed independently on the basis of my own observations in eight U.S. first grades and on my reading of ethnographic descriptions of first-grade reading lessons. See also Stahl et al. 1996 for more recent descriptions of three first grades, although all in the same school.

According to these sources, in actual practice, U.S. teachers often dropped the discussion of meaning *before* reading and moved directly to oral reading of the text. However, they all asked questions after the reading to assess students' comprehension. Although Durkin does not mention it, some teachers may have introduced some decoding activities informally during oral reading by giving phonetic cues to help students read, e.g., "What does the *a* say in that word?" [cf. Center for Applied Linguistics' videotapes]

Thus there are two big differences between the French version and the U.S. version of the mixed method for reading instruction. First, as already noted with respect to U.S. prescriptions, the U.S. approach involved much less practice in explicit blending or decoding than the French approach. This explains how the same Guinean textbook could have too much phonics as far as American advisors were concerned and not enough phonics as far as French advisors were concerned.

Second, French and U.S. lessons conduct the work of teaching reading for meaning in entirely different ways. U.S. teachers do this work mainly by asking students comprehension questions *after* they have read. I saw little such activity during reading lessons in France. [Check fieldnotes; Mme Monet did ask one question on our videotape.] French teachers do not work much on comprehension *after* reading because the students themselves have generated the text. They assume on those grounds that the students understand the words and the sentences. (As you saw, U.S. manuals encouraged comprehension work before reading, but U.S. teachers tended not to do it.)

If you asked me why French and U.S. teachers structured mixed-method lessons so differently, I would point first to classroom organization and the use of different classroom tools. In France, teachers conduct whole-class reading lessons most of the time (Anderson-Levitt f.c.), which makes it easier to work with text at the board. Being able to use the board—and the multiple surfaces of the chalkboard are completely covered with text by the end of the week—facilitates the elicitation of sentences from the students. U.S. teachers, on the other hand, conduct most reading lessons in small homogenous groups using commercial primers. Because they organize the groups by level, they would not expect all students in the class to work with a sentence generated by some. Hence the felt need to ask comprehension questions after reading.

Conclusion [to develop]

This case study demonstrates that visions of "modern" schooling, at least in the domain of best practice for early reading instruction, are far from monolithic. Foreign advisors implicitly

define the "same" teaching methods differently. In addition, local educators re-interpret ideas borrowed from outside to suit local sensibilities. Not only does practice vary from official prescription in Guinea, in France, and in the United States, but official prescription varies among these three countries.

The world institutions theory that a global vision of modern schooling informs schooling around the world cannot be disputed—as long as one interprets it at a highly abstract level. The very fact that Guineans continue to import French, U.S. and Canadian ideas about teaching suggests a kind of "globalization" at work. However, countries "creolize" as they globalize (Hannerz 1987, 1992). As Guinea did in this case, they adapt the ideas they adopt, making them their own by tailoring them to their own material and historical contexts. Moreover, countries borrow from a variety of core nations that share many elements of a model in name only. Inside a country like Guinea, people are using the same terms to speak different languages about schooling.

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Notes

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[2] Whether the purported model is willingly embraced by local educators as Meyer et al. claims is a separate issue Elsewhere I have analyzed the process by which Guinean experts have adopted Western ideas, arguing that the power of donors is very much in play, as Ginsburg et al. have claimed (1991). However, Guinean decision-makers—recognizing the fragmentation among international players I will describe here—sometimes play one international player against another (Anderson-Levitt & Alimasi in press).

[3] A phonics approach may be called "synthetic" in the United States as well when it emphasizes blending sounds (Chall 1983:102).

[4] There are several other methodological issues on which one can actually document worldwide agreement about received knowledge: (1) the value of "student-centered instruction" or student participation; (2) the value of content and method that attends to relevance or the child's lived experiences; (3) the use of maternal language for very early instruction where politics permits it.

[5] I do mean everywhere. Quranic teachers in Morocco now incorporate phonics teaching alongside visual memorization of words (Wagner 1993:47). Chinese, which is written with ideographs ("pictures" of words) that do not represent the sound of the words, must be read by sight. However, even Chinese is sometimes transcribed phonetically into the Roman alphabet (pinyin), and in Taiwan teachers use a syllabary to introduce reading. Japanese, although written with ideographs borrowed from the Chinese system, relies heavily on syllabaries for instructing new readers (Stevenson et al. 1982:1167).

[6] The recent pro-phonics legislation in California may represent the beginning of a shift back toward more phonics within the mixed method but if so will end up as standardized across the U.S. or the world.

[7] This history relies on doctoral theses by Lamarana Petty Diallo (1991) and Ibrahima Lalya-Bah (1991), on an unpublished study by Henri Kourouma (n.d.), on a study by Aly Bandara Doukouré (1997), and on interviews with authors of Guinean textbooks and with staff of the INRAP and the Institut de Recherche sur la Lingüistique Appliquée. Any errors of fact or interpretation are my own.

[8] Like French primers until very recently, *Mamadou and Bineta* avoided teaching capital letters.

[9] "La maîtrise de la combinatoire" (mastery of blending or synthesis) is defined in this text as "[maîtrise] du lien des lettres et des syllabes entre elles, et du rapport des signes écrits aux sons qui leur correspondent" (mastery of the ties among letters and syllables, and of the relationship between written signs and the sounds that correspond to them) (Ministry 1991:97).

[10] In 1995, the top-selling primers in France were Hatier's *Ratus* at 97 000 copies, Nathan's *Le Nouveau Fil des mots* at 70 000 copes, Hachette's *Lecture en Fête* also at 70 000, and *Gafi, le fantôme*, also from Nathan, at 60 000 (Le Monde de l'éducation, "Rénover le manuels," avril 1996, no. 236, p. 39).

[11] All translations from the French are my own unless otherwise noted.

[12] The conditions under which we observed were limited. Although we observed inside 18 1st and 2nd year classes in 1998, observation of 6 of the 1st year classes took place at the beginning of the school year when the class had not really started the study of reading per se. In addition, in one class observed during the spring, the class had already begun end-of-year testing, which disrupted normal instruction. (The teacher conducted a brief model lesson for us.) Among the remaining 3 1st year classes and 8 2nd year classes, we were able to remain long enough to really follow the unrolling of a reading less (2-5 days) in only 1 of the former and 4 of the latter. We relied on discussions with the teachers and on perusal of their lesson plans to fill in gaps in observations of the other classes.

[13] French and North American advisors to Guinea also disagreed, sometimes without realizing it, on other issues such as the appropriateness of cursive text in first-year readers and the proper sequence for identifying objectives and developing new textbooks (Anderson-Levitt & Alimasi in press).

Figure 1.

t t *l l*

la tê te

la tête

Voir 1 Une attention avant les instructions des pages 18 et 19

ti tu to ta te té tè tê
ti tu to ta te té tè tê
je je je *je je je*

tête, tâte, ôte, ta ta, to to
tête, tâte, ôte, tata, toto

toto, as-tu ta tête?
toto, tâte ta tête
toto, tu tâtes ta tête
toto, je tâte ta tête
toto, je tâte ta tête

ÉCRITURES
(méthode voir page 121)

1° *t* 2° *ti, tu* etc (série de syllabes) 3° *tête, tâte* etc

sur le procédé : La Maîtresse fera remarquer ce qui précédent page 111 des syllabes. (Exemple : u, etc.) Dictée des mots : Ex : tata, toto. La plupart des élèves doivent parvenir à les écrire.

1 Remarques préliminaires
1 Procéder au tableau noir à l'étude de la lettre t, des syllabes et des mots des lignes 4 et 5 selon qu'il a été indiqué à la page 18
2 Avant de passer à la lecture du livre, écrire au tableau les mots et les phrases et demander aux élèves d'y trouver les lettres déjà étudiées, puis, plus tard, des syllabes, puis des mots, enfin des phrases.
3 Écrire au tableau et faire lire les phrases : papa a une pipe — papa ôte sa pipe — papa tape la tête — papa se tape la tête — nous tapons (faire exécuter ces actions).
4 Faire le mot et sous le sens de langage

II Étude de la présente page
1 Lignes 1 et 2 Montrer aux enfants une page, une phrase, un mot, une syllabe, la lettre. Faire observer ce qu'on doit lire. Leur faire comprendre ce que c'est qu'une page. Faire épeler la syllabe qui se lit. Faire voir un exemple indigène.
2 Lignes 3 à 11 Observations de même. Ne faire lire que les syllabes qui forment les 3 phrases du texte.

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p p *p p*

une pi pe *une pipe*

1 pi pu po pa pe pé pè pê
2 *pi pu po pa pe pé pè pê*
3 je je *je je* et et *et et*

4 to to, pa té, pa pa, tâ te, ô te,
5 pa ta te, é pi, pa tte, ta pe, ta ta
6 *pipe, patate, toto, paté*
7 oh! oh! toto ta pe pa té,
8 paté ta pe to to
9 ah! ah! pa pa ôte pa té,
10 pa pa ôte to to,
11 pa pa ta pe pa té et to to
12 *papa tape paté et toto*

ÉCRITURE
(méthode voir page 121)

1° *p* 2° syllabes *pi, pa, po* 3° mots *tape, papa*

Dictée par le procédé : La Maîtresse. 1° des syllabes. 2° des mots. 3° de petites phrases.

I Remarques préliminaires
1 Procéder au tableau noir à l'étude de la lettre p, des syllabes et des mots (lignes 4 et 5) selon qu'il a été indiqué à la page 18
2 Avant de passer à la lecture du livre, écrire au tableau les mots et les phrases et demander aux élèves d'y trouver les lettres déjà étudiées, puis, plus tard, des syllabes, puis des mots, enfin des phrases.
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Figure 2. Bonjour Fanta Bonjour Fodé.

3. Qu'est-ce que tu lis ?

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J'apprends à lire et à écrire.

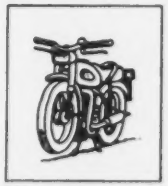
s'écrit ou

Oumar lit mal. *Oumar lit mal.*

Mou**ss**a lit t**ou**t : a, i, o, **ou.**

Moussa lit tout : a, i, o, ou.

ba, bi, bo, **bou,** *bou*	la, li, lo, **lou,** *lou*
pa, pi, po, **pou,** *pou*	da, di, do, **dou,** *dou*
ma, mi, mo, **mou,** *mou*	ra, ri, ro, **rou,** *rou*
ta, ti, to, **tou,** *tou*	na, ni, no, **nou,** *nou*


une **moto**

un **nid**

une **daba**

un **boubou**

- Oumar, l'ami de Moussa, parle loma ?
- Il parle poular.

1. u o b b o u
2. LebouboudeMamadou.
3. Lamotodepapa.
4. Balla la de daba

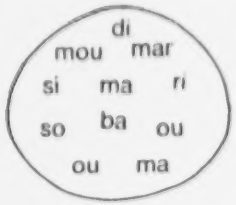


Figure 3. Langage - Lecture 1ère Année.

[ʀ] R, r, -

Pour aller à l'école, Marie porte une robe rouge.
Marie a une robe rouge.
La robe de Marie est rouge.
Sa robe est rouge.

Marie	porte	a	
une	robe	rouge	
est	de	sa	la

Marie a une robe rouge.
Sa robe est rouge.

Pour	Marie	porte	robe	rouge
• • • o	• • o • •	• • o • •	o • • •	o • • • •

M. Barry - mer - la cour - la craie - la règle - derrière - la porte - un arbre - bonjour.

une voiture

les chaussures

une robe

un rat

un ruban

rouge

vert

Oum(ar) il pa(rt) des fleu(rs)

re ra ro rou ru ri
or ar our

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Figure 5. Tables of syllables posted in one French classroom

ta – nita
te
ti – petite
to – tomate
tu – tulipe
té – l'été
tou – toujours
toi – histoire
ton - caneton